This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (withdrawn) A method of distributing testing materials comprising the acts of:

    storing a first version of a test package in a data store;

    establishing a communication link with a test center via a wide-area network;

    detecting, via said communication link, that a second version of said test package installed at said test center is outdated relative to said first version of said test package; and

    transmitting said first version of said test package to said test center via said network.

2. (withdrawn) The method of claim 1, wherein said establishing act comprises establishing said communication link via the Internet.

3. (withdrawn) The method of claim 1, wherein said storing act comprises storing said first version of said test package in a database.

4. (withdrawn) The method of claim 1, wherein said establishing act comprises using a Java Enterprise service to engage in communication with said test center.

5. (withdrawn) The method of claim 4, wherein said Java Enterprise service is one of ThinWEB servlet or JRUN V3.0.

6. (withdrawn) The method of claim 1, wherein said detecting act comprises:

    receiving a test center record indicative of test packages installed at said test center, said test center record indicating the presence or absence of one or more versions of said test package at said test center;

    determining, based on said test center record, that said first version of said test package is not installed at said test center.

7. (withdrawn) The method of claim 6, further comprising the act of:

prior to said transmitting act, determining, according to a criterion, that said first version of said test package may be installed at said test center.

8. (withdrawn) The method of claim 7, wherein said act of determining that said first version of said test package may be installed at said test center comprises the act of using an isVersionAllowed function which checks a version of software installed at said test center to determine whether an installation may proceed.

9. (withdrawn) The method of claim 1, further comprising the act of:
updating a test center record at said test center to reflect installation of said first version of said test package at said test center.

10. (withdrawn) The method of claim 1, wherein said transmitting act comprises:
packaging said test package in one or more data structures according to a first protocol; and
sending said one or more data structures to said test center via said wide-area network using a transport protocol different from said first protocol.

11. (withdrawn) The method of claim 10, wherein said transport protocol comprises Hypertext Transport Protocol.

12. (currently amended) A method of operating a testing center comprising the acts of:
establishing, via a wide-area network, a communication link with a first server remote from said testing center;
transmitting, to said first server via said communication link, first information indicative of a version of testing materials installed at said testing center;
receiving, from said first server via said communication link, and based on whether said first information indicates that said version of testing materials has been superseded by a current version of said testing materials, first testing materials comprising one or more test questions, wherein said first testing materials comprises said current version; and

electronically delivering said test questions to an examinee at said testing center, <u>wherein a computing device at which said test questions are delivered is not communicatively connected to said first server during the delivery</u>.

13. (original) The method of claim 12, wherein said establishing act comprises establishing said communication link via the Internet.

14. (original) The method of claim 12, wherein said establishing act comprises using a Java Enterprise service to engage in communication with said first server.

15. (original) The method of claim 14, wherein said Java Enterprise service is one of ThinWEB servlet or JRUN V3.0.

16. (original) The method of claim 12, wherein said transmitting act comprises transmitting a test center record indicative of a status of said testing center, said status including an identity of testing materials installed at said testing center.

17. (original) The method of claim 12, further comprising the act of:

transmitting, to said first server, property information indicative of software installed at said testing center.

18. (currently amended) The method of claim 12, further comprising the acts of:

receiving, via said wide-area network, using a transport protocol and at least one other protocol that packages information according to said transport protocol, data indicative of <u>a status of</u> said test center installation ~~status~~; and

storing said information at said test center.

19. (original) The method of claim 12, wherein said transmitting act comprises:

packaging said first information in one or more data structures according to a first protocol; and

sending said one or more data structures to said first server via said wide-area network using a transport protocol different from said first protocol.

20. (original) The method of claim 19, wherein said transport protocol comprises Hypertext Transport Protocol.

21. (currently amended) A system for computer-based testing comprising:

a test-delivery management module which receives testing materials from a server via a wide-area network, said test-delivery management module having a database which stores the received testing materials, said test-delivery management module further hosting first client-server logic which retrieves the testing materials from said database; and

a testing-station module which receives the testing materials from said test-delivery management module in a manner controlled by said first client-server logic, said testing-station module having a user interface which presents the testing materials to a candidate in a manner controlled by said first client-server logic, said testing-station module presenting the testing materials to a candidate while not communicatively connected to said server.

22. (original) The system of claim 21, wherein said first client-server logic comprises Java.

23. (original) The system of claim 21, wherein said test-delivery management module uses a protocol engine which implements a test-servicing protocol to receive said testing materials via said wide-area network, said protocol engine being installable on a computing device at a test servicing center with which said test-delivery management system communicates via said wide-area network, the protocol engine being adapted to communicate between the test servicing center and said test-delivery management module, said protocol engine comprising:

a service module which generates service data that provides a service to a testing center at which said test-delivery management module operates;

a service authorization module which is communicatively coupled to said service module, which receives the service data, and which engages in an authorization inquiry with the test-delivery management module to determine whether said test servicing

center may perform said service for said testing center, and which forward said service data to said testing center according to a result of said authorization inquiry;

an encryption module which is communicatively coupled to said service authorization module, which receives data from said service authorization module, and which encrypts said data; and

an authentication module which receives encrypted data from said encryption module and which engages in an authentication protocol with said testing center prior to forwarding said encrypted data to said testing center, said authentication module forwarding said encrypted data using a transport protocol different from the test servicing protocol.

24. (original) A protocol engine which implements a test servicing protocol, the protocol engine being installable on a computing device at a test servicing center, the protocol engine being adapted to facilitate communication between the test servicing center and a testing center, the protocol engine comprising:

a service module which generates service data that provides a service to the testing center;

a service authorization module which is communicatively coupled to said service module, which receives the service data, and which engages in an authorization inquiry with the testing center to determine whether said test service center may perform said service for said testing center, and which forward said service data to the testing center according to a result of said authorization inquiry;

an encryption module which is communicatively coupled to said service authorization module, which receives data from said service authorization module, and which encrypts said data; and

an authentication module which receives encrypted data from said encryption module and which engages in an authentication protocol with said testing center prior to forwarding said encrypted data to said testing center, said authentication module forwarding said encrypted data using a transport protocol different from the test servicing protocol.

25. (original) The protocol engine of claim 24, wherein said transport protocol comprises Hypertext Transport Protocol or Secure Hypertext Transport Protocol.

26. (original) The protocol engine of claim 24, wherein said authentication protocol comprises a challenge-response protocol.

27. (original) The protocol engine of claim 24, wherein said service comprises provision of testing materials to the testing center.

28. (original) The protocol engine of claim 27, wherein said authorization inquiry determines whether the testing center is authorized to receive said testing materials.

29. (original) The protocol engine of claim 24, wherein said service comprises provision of an updated version of a test to the testing center, the testing center previously storing an outdated version of the test.

30. (new) The method of claim 17, further comprising:
        receiving an update of said software and installing said update, if said property information indicates that said software is out of date, wherein said act of establishing a communication link is performed once per period, and wherein said communication link is non-established for a portion of said period.

31. (new) The method of claim 30, wherein said period is one day.

32. (new) The method of claim 12, wherein said testing materials are updated once per period, by way of said receiving act, if said testing materials are not current, wherein said act of establishing a communication link is performed once per said period, and wherein said communication link is non-established for a portion of said period.

33. (new) The method of claim 32, wherein said period is one day.

34. (new) The method of claim 12, further comprising:

transmitting a cryptographic certificate to the testing center, wherein the certificate is required to receive at least one of: (1) the testing materials, and (2) software that participates in said act of delivering said test questions.

35. (new) The method of claim 34, further comprising:

requiring a plurality of passwords to authenticate said certificate.

36. (new) The method of claim 35, further comprising:

by way of a communication between the testing center and said server, revoking said certificate.

37. (new) The system of claim 21, wherein said test-delivery management module communicates with said server once per period to determine whether an update any components at a test center are required, and receives said update if it is determined that said update is required.

38. (new) The system of claim 37, wherein it is determined that said testing materials are out of date, and wherein said test-delivery management module receives and installs an update to said testing materials.

39. (new) The system of claim 37, wherein it is determined that software that runs at a test center, at which said test-delivery management module and said testing-station module are operative, is out of date, and wherein said test-delivery management module receives and installs an update to said software.

40. (new) The system of claim 37, wherein said period is one day.